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BERLIN.—At the Theatre Royal they have just produced Auber's *La Part du Diable*, with great success. The principal rôles were filled by M'le Grun, M. Wowoski, M'le Himala, M. M. Salomon, etc. M. Radecke conducted the orchestra.

A new tenor has made his appearance in Berlin, named M. Seichen. He has made a great success, though, as the newspapers of that city say, he is only the son of an eating-house keeper. Horrible!

DRESDEN.—The Theatre Royal of this city is to produce Weber's *Oberon* with the most brilliant effects.

THE opera houses of Prussia, with but few exceptions, are doing or preparing to do *Romeo and Juliette*. M'le Adele Löjne has been engaged as prima donna at the Theatre Leipzig.

THE Italian journals announce the suppression of the concerts of the military bands of that kingdom. The reason for this movement is not given, and has created infinite disgust in musical circles. We presume it is in consequence of a necessity to keep all their wind for the coming war.

THE new Theatre at Naples progresses famously. It is to be called the Teatro Donizetti, and is built upon the ground where once stood a convent.

THE orpheonists of Donni have just carried off the first prize in the grand trial at Brussels. The Society *Rotter Munsterkoor* of Rotterdam came second, and the *Enfants la Belgique* of Paris, third.

Mlle. Loeve has been singing the rôle of Zerlina, in "*Fra Diavolo*," at Leipzig, with great success.

PARIS.

The first representation of M. Duprato's one-act opera, or operetta, *La Fiancée de Corinthe*, so long in rehearsal, so long promised, and so long anxiously awaited by the composer and his friends, was given at the Théâtre Impérial de l'Opéra a few nights since, with hardly that brilliancy of success which was anticipated by the management. He was born at Nîmes in 1826, took the "*Prix de Rome*" in 1848, and brought out his first work, *Les Trouvailles*, a *pasticcio*, in 1854, which had a fair success. M. Duprato is decidedly clever, and handles his orchestra like a practiced musician. Moreover, his melodies, though too often commonplace, are frank and natural. He writes, however, with too much pretension, and seems to labor in the attainment of a "grand style." This certainly he has not achieved in his *Fiancée de Corinthe*, which is more of a cantata than an opera. If the *Fiancée* had not greatly succeeded no blame can be attributed to M. Perrin, who, in the matter of "mounting" and singers, was as liberal as any manager could be. Mdlle. Mauduit and Mdlle. Bloch were both good, the former, indeed, excellent, singing and acting like one under an internal influence, which could hardly be affirmed of her fair co-artist, who was somewhat cold and indif-

ferent, it might be, nervous. The *répétition* of the ballet of *Le Corsaire*—one of the sometime glories of the opera—was a delight to all the old lovers of the ballet, who, I am grieved to think, seem to pass away yearly with the growing desire for utility and realization. We no longer sigh for "dreamland," and require murders, breaches of commandments, and subjects the most revolting to excite our feelings. Everything must now be founded on fact, be real and natural, as it is called, and imagination must succumb to cold calculation. Poetry is defunct, and the ballet, one of its fairest children, is dying of a rapid consumption. Mdlle. Granzow, the new Medora of the *répétition*, is very charming and full of talent of the most alluring kind, together with an appearance that takes the eye at a single glance. The remembrance of Rosati, however, was detrimental to a great success for Mdlle. Granzow, and it is almost a pity that the fair Russian *danseuse* should have made her *début* in a part so intimately associated with one of the most accomplished daughters of Terpsichore who has figured on the boards of the Opéra for half a century. Nevertheless, Mdlle. Granzow is destined to become a great favorite.

[From the Neue Berliner Music-Zeitung.]

A MUSICAL WANDERER.

Every one who has traveled during the last forty years through the beautiful country of Thuringia must certainly have met with an old man, who belonged, so to speak, to the characteristic figures of the landscape. Many persons may not so much as have heard his name, but merely have carried away with them the recollection of an individual somewhat deranged in his mind; others, however, may have made themselves acquainted with the history of "the old *Capellmeister*," as he was always familiarly called. One thing is very certain: the old man led a restless wandering life, and was everywhere to be found, and everywhere at home throughout the length and breadth of Thuringia. In figure he was thin, of middle height, and bent a little forward. Plainly, nay, poorly clad, he went about carrying under his arm a paper parcel, which contained music for sale. His high, broad forehead, and noble features, however, stamped him as no ordinary man, but a closer examination discovered that mysterious contraction and expansion of the eyebrows said to be a sure sign of previous or present mental derangement, and peculiar to many unhappily so afflicted. He himself would naturally never admit anything of the sort, and if, through ignorance or carelessness, he was ever reminded of it, his blue eyes flashed in a truly wondrous manner. For forty years the old man wandered uninterruptedly about Thuringia, besides undertaking long and romantic journeys elsewhere. It is not astonishing that, in the course of so long a period, such a striking personage should become, as it were, an indispensable part of the landscape. Any one fortunate enough to hear the strange old man—who had offered him, perhaps, not long before, a piece of music for a few groschens,—playing the piano, or the organ, could not help feeling that it was an instance of no ordinary genius hopelessly ruined. Such, indeed, was the case. In his younger years, in the full strength of youth, Louis Böhner, for he it was who was the old *Capellmeister*, ranked among the most remarkable profes-

sors of the musical art, and was the object of great expectations.

Töttestadt, in the duchy of Gotha, where he was born on the 8th January, 1787, was his principal residence during the forty years of his restless wandering in Thuringia. His first musical studies were pursued under his father, an organist and parish chanter, and his talent for composition soon manifested itself. His attention was directed mostly to the scores of Bach, Fuchs, Kirnberger, Frescobaldi, etc., while Haydn and Mozart kept alive and imparted fresh energy to his musical enthusiasm. It was not, however, till he went to Erfurt, in his thirteenth year, to attend the Gymnasium, that he followed any regular plan in his musical studies. Soon after he did so, his decided vocation for music was plainly revealed. The most brilliant star in the musical firmament of Thuringia was, at that time, Louis Spohr in Gotha, whither Böhner removed, in order to perfect himself under Spohr's direction. Spohr took a great liking to him, even procuring him the opportunity of appearing as pianist at the court of Gotha, and very soon the young man had plenty to do as a music-master. In the year 1808, he went to Zena, where he remained two years. But he was then seized with his traveling mania, and after visiting his relatives, he set out, in the spring of 1810, upon his pilgrimage. He gave concerts in various large towns. At Nuremberg especially, he achieved a more than usually triumphant success. He intended to proceed to Vienna, but his plans were frustrated. His passport had not been vided by the Austrian Ambassador at Dresden, so, being obliged to turn back at Linz, he returned to Nuremberg. He was received with open arms by the friends his art had procured him, and speedily felt quite at home. He remained in this town six years, during which he resided, free from care, at the house of a friend endowed with a taste for art, composing and playing in public very industriously, while his reputation continued to extend more and more. His works met with the most decided success and were taken up by the leading publishers, such as Breitkopf and Härtel, Hofmeister, etc.

Whether it was that the deaths of his grandfather and grandmother, of his father and mother, and of several of his brothers and sisters, which took place in rapid succession, was too violent a shock for him, or whether bitter experience and events of another description obscured the entire range of his intellectual horizon—one thing is certain: his fine artistic spirit began even then giving proofs of momentary derangement. The artist so highly esteemed by everyone frequently fell into strange moods, which often degenerated into absolute delusions. It cannot surprise us that, under the influence of such demoniacal influence, he soon found it impossible to remain longer by his friend's hospitable hearth, but felt driven out into the wide world. Henceforth he never more found repose. At that period, by the way, the Fury of War brandished her torch over half Europe, and rendered a professional tour almost impossible. We see him there hastening in his flight, without stopping long anywhere, through Wurtemberg, Baden, Alsatia, and Switzerland, giving concerts only now and then in the larger towns. At length, through Wurtemberg and Bavaria, he again reached Leipsic, where he made a long rest. His concerts at the Gewandhaus excited universal interest, and such men as Rochlitz,

and Gottfried Weber, entertained the kindest feelings towards the genial musician. Böhner gained, also, great honor and considerable sums of money by short trips to Weimar and Gotha, performing at the Courts of both places. Despite of all this, however, his hours of gloom returned only too often, and to the overclouding of his soul was added in Leipsic a gouty affection which for years caused the poor fellow most acute sufferings in the head. He soon felt that he could not remain in Leipsic, but must a second time go forth to seek an unknown and uncertain future.

He proceeded, in 1818, by the way of Frankfort, to the Rhine and conceived the bold notion of making, as virtuoso, a tour beyond the bounds of Germany. It seemed as though, by this notion, Fate wished to open for him the door to happiness, to the friendly and flower-wreathed harbors of Life, but his Evil Demon would not permit it. Böhner first directed his steps to Hamburg. Here, as well as in Bremen and Oldenburgh, whither he had made some few trips, he met with tremendous success, the ladies especially exhibiting great enthusiasm for him and his genial performances. The wealthy lovers of art in Hamburg patronized him most warmly, and, in consequence of the reputation which preceded him thence, he met with a brilliant welcome the following year in Copenhagen. He now mounted, at one bound, to the pinnacle of fame and fortune. He resided at Court, and was the King's guest. It is to the influence of his Evil Demon alone that we must attribute the fact of his throwing up all this, and of his returning home, poor as a church mouse, in the most reduced circumstances. All Copenhagen, particularly the female world, had paid him the homage of unanimous approbation; he made a brilliant income and lived like a nobleman. But he suddenly tore himself away; set out on foot without bag or baggage; and for a long time wandered about on the high road or in the forests. At length he returned to Copenhagen, and embarked for Rostock. Thence he walked to Schwerin, and from Schwerin to Hamburg. Never could he find rest; nay he did not even dare to enter a house, but every day walked fifteen leagues or more. Without stopping anywhere he pursued his romantic way through Hanover, Hildesheim, and Nordhausen to Gotha, and the reader may conceive his condition on reaching that town. His luggage, which included several valuable manuscripts, was never forwarded him, though he asserted he had sent it off by the post from Copenhagen. How fearful his journey must have been may be inferred from the fact that once in the neighborhood of Hamburg he was nearly swallowed up in a swamp, having entirely lost his way in a wood, so dark was the night.

From this time he settled in his native town of Töttelstadt, if, indeed, "settled" is the correct term, for it was now that his restless wand rings up and down Thuringia began—wanderings which lasted, almost without interruption, from the year 1820 to the year 1860, the year of his death, and caused him soon to be known to both old and young as "the old *Capellmeister*." There are numerous episodes and anecdotes related of him during this period. It is evident from many of them that he suffered more or less from delusions, but in many of them there speaks the highly-gifted artist, who, in his endless and magnificent extemporizings

on the piano could utterly forget himself and all around to dive down beneath the waves of tone. "Full of magic charm," says his poetical friend, Müller von der Werra, "were his chains of fanciful ideas, from which he frequently could not tear himself, sitting for days and sometimes whole nights and playing uninterruptedly on the piano. Had he not worn the clothes of a beggar, he might have been taken for some supernatural being."

For forty years, that is up to 1860, did he wander thus restlessly about. At the beginning of 1860 (on the 28th of March,) he died rather suddenly at Gotha, in consequence of a severe cold caught on one of his peregrinations which he had been induced by a strange whim to undertake. His friend, L. Storch, the well-known poet, had published a sketch of him in the *Gartenlaube*. Böhner felt deeply offended because the occasional fits of mental derangement to which he was subject had been too plainly hinted at by his friend. He determined to go to Leipsic for the purpose of persuading the editor of the periodical in question to print another biography. All the arguments of his friends at Gotha were unavailing to divert him from his project. He started, but got no farther than Erfurt, whence he was obliged to return to Gotha. After keeping his bed for a short time, he expired, to find in death that repose which he had vainly sought in life.

His compositions are numerous; they all breathe the pleasing, light spirit of his great model, Mozart.—Numerous, too, are, probably, his unpublished smaller productions, which he sold in manuscript during his wanderings. At any rate, many of his small songs have been vocally preserved by the lower classes in Thuringia, and it is said that many a melody entitled a Thuringian folk-song is due to him. We will remind our readers only of the universally known "Ach, wie ist's möglich dann," etc. It would, perhaps, be a difficult task to determine what foundation there is for the report that C. M. von Weber borrowed some of the finest melodies in *Der Freischütz* (even the "Bridal Chorus" for instance) from Thuringian folk-songs emanating from Böhner. Though the rich genius of a man like Weber did not require to borrow from any one, still that does not say that strange strains of a national character might not have retained a firm possession of his ear, and, remodeled in his own mind, have been reproduced at the proper time. Böhner himself is stated to have expressed similar sentiments on this subject. Many of his orchestral compositions deserve to be rescued from oblivion; they are very far superior to the mediocre productions with which the managers of our exceedingly numerous Garden Concerts are accustomed to overwhelm us.

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